



Environment as Luxury and Necessity (in Hindi)

LESSON 5 OF 7



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ENVIRONMENT AS A NECESSITY AND LUXURY

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ENVIRONMENT AS A NECESSITY

- Rapid environmental degradation that has been taking place all over the world in recent decades has alarmed economists and environmentalists alike. Most of the economists are now convinced that unless strong steps are taken to preserve environment the future is doomed. The danger in developing countries is that communities may inadvertently as a result of ignorance or economic necessity.

Damage to the environment has three potential costs to present and future human welfare:

- It harms human health
- It reduces economic productivity
- It leads to loss amenities

ENVIRONMENT DEGRADATION HARMS HUMAN HEALTH

- As noted by WDR, 1992, human welfare is reduced by ill health and premature mortality caused by degradation of air and water quality and by other environmental risks.
- Pollutants can cause health problems due to direct exposure or indirectly through changes in physical environment- the effects of which range from increased solar radiation to lower nutrition.

ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION REDUCES ECONOMIC PRODUCTIVITY

- Impaired health may lower human productivity, and environmental degradation reduces the productivity of many resources used directly by people. Water pollution damages fisheries and waterlogging and salinization of the soil lowers crop yields.

ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION LEADS TO LOSS OF AMENITIES

- Amenities include values that range from those associated with recreation to those associated with deeply held spiritual views about the intrinsic worth of the natural world. Amenities are hard to measure than costs to health and productivity but must be valued just as highly.

ENVIRONMENT AS A LUXURY

- According to some economists, there is a conflict of sorts between economic growth and environmental protection. The processes of economic growth are invariably accompanied by increased level of pollution and environmental degradation.
- It is said that since the developing countries have very low levels of income, widespread poverty and high unemployment levels, they have no choice but to focus on economic growth. At the present level of their development, focussing on environmental issues is a luxury they cannot afford.

- As discussion of some of the costs of environmental protection as given in the Report follows:
- Agriculture
- Industrial emissions and wastes
- Road transport
- Water and sanitation

CONCLUSION

- Environmental protection involves a huge expenditure and this expenditure is bound to strain the resources available with the developing countries considerably, yet these countries can afford to neglect environment at their own peril.